

ECONOMIC PRIORITIES FOR WOMEN OF COLOR

- **Message 1: Even though women make up almost half of the workforce and are often breadwinners for their families, they earn considerably less than their male counterparts.**
 - o Women of all races and ethnicities earn \$0.81 for each dollar that their White, male counterparts earn.¹
 - o Black women and Latinas earn even less. Latinas earn \$0.62 cents and Black women earn \$0.65 cents for each dollar earned by a White man.²
 - o Women of color compose two-thirds of low-wage workers and are overrepresented in tipped wage industries.³
 - **Policy recommendation:** Campaigns should focus on enacting equal pay policies that advance equality and dignity for women at work. They should also seek to increase the federal minimum wage and the Federal tipped wage to provide women with an immediate increase in their incomes.
- **Message 2: Most working women of color lack access to paid leave in any form, including paid family leave and paid sick leave.**
 - o Latinas are the least likely of any racial or ethnic group to have access to paid family leave, with only one-in-three Latinas who have access to this important benefit.⁴
 - o Working families lose an estimated \$20.6 billion in wages each year due to lack of access to paid family leave.⁵
 - **Policy recommendations:** Candidates should propose inclusive paid leave policies following the birth or adoption of a child or for a worker's own serious illness or the serious illness of a family member. Paid leave policies should provide for 12 weeks of paid leave, provide a high rate of wage replacement, protect workers' jobs, and be universally available to all workers.
- **Message 3: For women and families of color, child care is fundamental to supporting their families, but its out of reach for many.**
 - o For families of color, child care expenses consist of an average of 15% of their monthly income.⁶
 - o Latino families spend an average of 11.2% of their household income on child care while Black families spend 11.5%. Meanwhile, White families spend 9.7% of their household income on child care.
 - **Policy recommendation:** Candidates should improve child care for all working families by substantially increasing federal direct assistance programs and improving federal tax credits that will give all families access to affordable, comprehensive, high-quality child care programs. Proposals should:
 - ✓ Provide investments that will make high-quality child care affordable to everyone, including low- and middle-class families.
 - ✓ Ensure that all children receive high-quality child care, that meets families' needs, including access to sufficient options and different settings.
 - ✓ Expand availability and access to high-quality child care for infants and toddlers.
 - ✓ Support workers who provide child care, by improving compensation and providing professional development and training opportunities.

Endnotes

- 1 Institute for Women's Policy Research. "The Gender Wage Gap: 2018." March, 2019. Accessed on June 2, 2019. https://iwpr.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/C478_Gender-Wage-Gap-in-2018.pdf.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 National Women's Law Center. "Low-Wage Jobs Held Primarily by Women Will Grow the Most Over the Next Decade." August, 2018. Accessed on June 2, 2019. <https://nwlc-ciw49tixgw5lbab.stackpathdns.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Low-Wage-Jobs-Held-Primarily-by-Women-Will-Grow-the-Most-Over-the-Next-Decade-2018.pdf>.
- 4 Glynn, Sarah Jane. "Latinos Least Likely to Have Paid Leave or Workplace Flexibility." November 20, 2012. Accessed on June 2, 2019. <https://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/GlynnLatinosPaidLeave1.pdf>.
- 5 Glynn, Sarah Jane and Danielle Corley. "The Cost of Work-Family Policy Inaction." 2016. Accessed June 3, 2019. <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/women/reports/2016/09/22/143877/the-cost-of-inaction/>.
- 6 UnidosUS calculations from U.S. Census Bureau's Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2014 Panel Wave 2. <http://www2.census.gov/library/publications/2011/compendia/statab/131ed/tables/12s0616.xls?#>